



**United States Department of Agriculture**

## ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Each applicant must meet all of the following eligibility requirements:

- Be a U.S. citizen or eligible U.S. permanent resident (Please visit the Office of Personnel Management web site for student employment at [www.opm.gov/employ/students](http://www.opm.gov/employ/students) and click on Regulations in order to verify permanent resident eligibility)
- Be in good academic standing with at least a cumulative 2.75 grade point average based on a 4.0 scale
- Have a strong interest in a career in public service with the USDA
- Meet major/class level requirements of specific USDA agencies. (Please see listing of scholarship programs for more detailed information)

## DESCRIPTION OF THE PROGRAM

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Public Service Leaders Scholarship (PSLS) program is designed to promote public service and to create access to higher education for undergraduate and graduate students.

### The program offers:

- Full-tuition scholarships for 2-4 years
- An Internship leading to permanent employment
- Employee benefits
- Mentoring, career development, and leadership training
- Use of a personal computer

### The USDA offers the opportunity to:

- Make a difference in the nation and the world
- Obtain a challenging and interesting job assignment
- Gain experience in your career field
- Develop your leadership skills

*Upon graduation, scholarship recipients become permanent employees of the USDA and must be prepared to work for USDA for one year for each year of educational assistance received.*

### Successful applicants are:

- Committed to public service
- Leaders in their community
- Intellectually curious

## APPLICATION MATERIALS

To be considered for the PSLS program you must submit the following materials:

- ☐ Scholarship application (make sure that your essay is included)
- ☐ Proof of U.S. Residency (if you are a U.S. Permanent Resident)
- ☐ Letter of Recommendation
- ☐ Official Transcript with **cumulative GPA**
- ☐ Resume

**FAILURE TO INCLUDE ANY OF THE ABOVE DOCUMENTS WILL RESULT IN  
AUTOMATIC DISQUALIFICATION**

### **APPLICATION PACKET DUE JUNE 2, 2003**

**FAX TO:** 202-296-3774  
**EMAIL TO:** [saugustsson@hispanicfund.org](mailto:saugustsson@hispanicfund.org)  
**MAIL TO:** Hispanic College Fund, Inc.  
1717 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Suite 460  
Washington, D.C. 20006

## APPLICATION PROCEDURES AND IMPORTANT DATES

June 2, 2003	<b>Application Deadline</b>  The application must be postmarked by this deadline. You can submit your application by fax, email, or mail. If you submit your application by fax or email, please mail the rest of the documents including official transcript, letter of recommendation, resume, and proof of U.S. Residency (if applicable).  <b>Fax to:</b> 202-296-3774 <b>Email to:</b> <a href="mailto:saugustsson@hispanicfund.org">saugustsson@hispanicfund.org</a> <b>Mail to:</b> Hispanic College Fund, Inc. 1717 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Suite 460 Washington, DC 20006
July 2003	<b>Interview Process</b>  USDA will screen the candidates through either a phone or in person interview. After the interview process, successful candidates will be matched with internship and employment positions.
July 18, 2003	<b>Notification of Applicants</b>  Each applicant will be notified by the agency who conducted their interview
August 10 –13, 2003	<b>Orientation for Selected Scholars</b>  All selected scholarship recipients will be required to attend an orientation in Washington, DC. The orientation is all expenses paid and will feature an introduction to the USDA, leadership training, and mentorship from current USDA management.
September 1, 2003	<b>Scholarship Sent to Your University</b>
Summer 2004	<b>Internship at USDA</b>
September 1, 2004	<b>Scholarship Sent to Your University</b>
Summer 2005	<b>Internship at USDA</b>
Fall 2005	<b>Employment at USDA*</b>

\*This is the schedule for a two year scholarship. For a four year scholarship award, the internships will continue in the summer, the scholarships will be sent in the fall, and upon graduation employment will begin at the USDA.

## TIPS FOR COMPLETING YOUR SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

1. Make sure that you complete your scholarship application on time and that you answer all of the questions.
2. Check the list of scholarships offered at the end of this application packet and make sure you qualify for a scholarship program BEFORE you complete the application. There is no sense in completing an application for which you do not qualify.
3. Read ALL instructions carefully. If there is something that you do not understand contact the Hispanic College Fund (HCF). HCF is administering this program for the USDA. You can contact HCF by calling 1-800-644-4223 or emailing [saugustsson@hispanicfund.org](mailto:saugustsson@hispanicfund.org).
4. Answer the essay question. Make sure you address all points of the question and that your proofread your essay prior to submission.
5. Make sure your resume is current and relevant to this program.
6. Ask someone to write your letter of recommendation NOW. You want to give that person as much time as possible to write a quality letter of recommendation.
7. Request to have your transcript sent NOW. It can take up to two weeks to have official transcripts sent.

## **APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS**

To ensure your application is complete, we strongly recommend mailing all documents in one envelope.  
***All attachments must contain your full name and social security number.***

### **Scholarship Application**

Complete and submit all sections of the application. Please include a printout of your essay.

### **Essay**

Submit a 500-800 word typed essay that addresses all of the following questions:

1. What is your personal motivation for applying for the scholarship and why is public service important to you?
2. What are your academic and career goals?
3. What skills do you bring to USDA?

### **Proof of U.S. Residency if Applicable**

If you are a U.S. Permanent Resident you must submit a copy of your Permanent Resident Card. If you are a U.S. citizen, you do not need to submit proof of citizenship.

### **Letter of Recommendation**

Submit ONE TYPED current letter of recommendation on college/university letterhead from your academic counselor, advisor, faculty member, or employer that addresses the Selection Committee specifically. Make sure that your letter of recommendation is from someone who knows you well and can speak to your abilities.

The letter should tell us about your:

- Personal strengths
- Leadership qualities
- Academic and extracurricular achievements
- Future academic and career aspirations

### **Transcript**

Submit an official college/university transcript indicating your most recent academic work including Fall semester 2002.

Transcripts MUST include your cumulative GPA on a 4.0 scale. If your transcript does not show a cumulative GPA, request that a school official confirm this information on school letterhead with his or her signature.

Transcripts must have name, social security number, and name of the institution.

### **Resume**

Please submit a current one-page resume. The resume will be used during the scholarship selection process as well as for internship opportunities.

**FAILURE TO INCLUDE ANY REQUIRED DOCUMENTS WILL RESULT IN  
AUTOMATIC DISQUALIFICATION**

Social Security Number \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

## PERSONAL BACKGROUND

Mr.  
Ms.  
Mrs

First Name

Middle Name or Initial

Last Name

(      )

Permanent Home (or Parents') Address

City

State

Zip

Home Phone

(      )

Your Mailing Address (If not living with parents) City

State

Zip

Your Phone

Email Address

Date of Birth:

Month

Day

Year

Place of Birth:

City

State

Country of Birth

Gender:

☐ Male

☐ Female

Are you the first person in your family to attend college?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Citizenship: ☐ U.S. Citizen ☐ U.S. Permanent Resident

Ethnic background, optional, will not be used in any selection decision:

☐ American or Alaskan Native

☐ Black or African American

☐ Asian American

☐ Hispanic or Latino

☐ White American

## ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

In the Fall of 2003 I will be a college (Check one):

☐ Freshman

☐ Senior

☐ Sophomore

☐ Graduate

☐ Junior

College/University You Will Be Attending in Fall 2003

Will you be a transfer student this fall? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Campus

Cumulative GPA as of Fall 2002 (on a 4.0 scale) \_\_\_\_\_

Address

What is your expected year of graduation? \_\_\_\_\_

City

State

Zip

What is your major? \_\_\_\_\_

This is a (check one): ☐ 2-Year ☐ 4-Year Institution

## USDA AGENCY OF INTEREST

Please indicate using the scholarship code what scholarship you are interested in receiving\*:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

\*You may put up to three selections. Please put these selections in order of preference. If you are only interested in receiving a scholarship from one USDA Agency & Location, please put only that code.

Social Security Number \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

## COST OF EDUCATION

Please note that your academic expenses **DO NOT** need to equal your sources of academic support. For academic expenses, please provide all the information below that pertains to your school. For sources of academic support, please estimate the contributions that you and/or your parents will be able to make towards your college education this year. Additionally, estimate the grants and scholarships that you will receive for the academic year 2003-2004 based on your financial aid award letter from this year (or the previous year if you have not received your award letter for this year). **DO NOT** include the grant expected from USDA or loans as a source of academic support.

### ACADEMIC EXPENSES

Please provide the estimated expenses for the college/university you will be attending in Fall 2003

Full-Year Tuition and Fees	\$ _____
Room and Board (provide only if you plan to live on campus)	+ _____
Books and Supplies	+ _____
Medical & Life Insurance	+ _____
Other Expenses	+ _____
<b>Total Expenses (please sum)</b>	= \$ _____

### SOURCES OF ACADEMIC SUPPORT

Estimated Financial Sources You Will Use To Pay Your College Costs For Academic Year 2003-04

Your Contribution	\$ _____
Parents' Contribution	+ _____
Spouse's Contribution (if applicable)	+ _____
Grants (Pell, SEOG, State)	+ _____
Other Scholarships (anticipated)	+ _____
<b>Total Income (please sum)</b>	= \$ _____

## STUDENT EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND AWARDS

List Academic Honors & Awards you received:

List Volunteer, Community, and Athletic Activities you participated in:

## RECRUITMENT

I learned of the PLSL Program by:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> USDA HSINP Web Page   | <input type="checkbox"/> Professor              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic College Fund | <input type="checkbox"/> Family Member/Friend   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Academic Advisor      | <input type="checkbox"/> USDA Contact           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Career Center         | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify): _____ |

## ESSAY - Please Type

Submit a 500-800 word typed essay that addresses all of the following questions:

1. What is your personal motivation for applying for the scholarship and why is public service important to you?
2. What are your academic and career goals?
3. What skills do you bring to USDA?

## List of Scholarships for the Public Service Leaders Scholarship Program

Scholarship Code	USDA Agency	Discipline	Job Title	Location	Level*	Length of Scholarship
FSA-01	Farm Service Agency	Accounting, Economics, Finance, Agriculture, Ag Business/Econ	Farm Loan Officer	California	Undergrad	Two Years
FSA-02	Farm Service Agency	Accounting, Economics, Finance, Management, Agriculture Econ	Contract Specialist	Kansas City, MO	Undergrad	Two Years
FSA-03	Farm Service Agency	Human Resources, Business Admin, Business, Public Policy, Public Administration	Human Resources Specialist	Washington D.C.	Undergrad	Two Years
NRCS-04	Natural Resources Conservation Service	Civil Engineering, Soil Science, Ag Biology, Agronomy, Horticulture, any Natural Resources related fields (w/minimum of 6 credit hours of soils)	Civil Engineer Soil Conservationist	Massachusetts	Undergrad	Two or Four Years
NRCS-05	Natural Resources Conservation Service	Civil Engineering, Soil Science, Ag Biology, Agronomy, Horticulture, any Natural Resources related fields (w/minimum of 6 credit hours of soils)	Civil Engineer Soil Conservationist	West Virginia	Undergrad	Two or Four Years
NRCS-06	Natural Resources Conservation Service	Civil Engineering	Civil Engineer	Georgia	Undergrad	Two or Four Years
NRCS-07	Natural Resources Conservation Service	Soil Science, Ag Biology, Agronomy, Horticulture, any Natural Resources related fields (w/minimum of 6 credit hours of soils)	Soil Conservationist	Maryland	Undergrad	Two or Four Years
NRCS-08	Natural Resources Conservation Service	Soil Science, Ag Biology, Agronomy, Horticulture, any Natural Resources related fields (w/minimum of 6 credit hours of soils)	Soil Conservationist	Michigan	Undergrad	Two or Four Years
CSREES-09	Cooperative State Research, Education And Extension Service	Human & Social Sciences	Student Trainee	Washington D.C.	Undergrad	Two or Four Years
NASS-10	National Agricultural Statistics Service	Ag Econ, Math & Statistics	Student Trainee	Las Cruces, NM	Undergrad	Two Years

NASS-11	National Agricultural Statistics Service	Ag Econ, Math & Statistics	Student Trainee	Orlando, FL	Undergrad	Two Years
FNS-12	Food & Nutrition Service	Public Policy, Public Administration, Nutrition	Program Specialist Nutritionist	Boston, MA	Graduate	Two Years
FNS-13	Food & Nutrition Service	Business Administration	Program Specialist	Dallas, TX	Undergrad	Two Years
GIPSA-14	Grain Inspection, Packers & Stockyards Administration	English, Public Affairs, Public Policy	Writer/Editor or Public Affairs Specialist	Washington D.C.	Undergrad	Two Years
FS-15	Forest Service	Forestry	Forester	Glenwood, AR	Undergrad	Two Years
FS-16	Forest Service	Forestry	Forester	Dolores, CO	Undergrad	Two Years

\* If the length of the scholarship is two years AND it is for undergraduate students, then you must be an upperclassman in the Fall of 2003 to receive the scholarship award. If you only have one year of school remaining, you may still be eligible to receive a scholarship. Prior to working full-time at the USDA, you must complete 640 internship hours. If you attend school in the same location as the job/internship, then you may be able to complete your hours by working part-time during the school year and full-time during the summer.